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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/663,585	09/16/2003	Robert A. Hendel	020354 071P2	3291

33805 7590 05/23/2006

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EXAMINER
DRODGE, JOSEPH W

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1723	

DATE MAILED: 05/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/663,585	HENDEL ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Joseph W. Drodge	1723	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *11 April 2006*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *2,3,7,8 and 12-15* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *2,3,7,8 and 12-15* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham* **v.** *John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 2,3,7,12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al patent 6,444,747, of record in view of McNeel et al patent 6,180,056. Chen et al generally disclose the instantly claimed co-polymer (Abstract) used for inhibiting scale and corrosion of surfaces, including reverse osmosis and microfiltration membranes (column 5, lines 34-63), the co-polymer being dissolved into the aqueous carrier medium that will contact the membrane (column 4, lines 14-21). Concentrations of copolymer are disclosed in column 4,lines 16-18 for claims 2 and 3. For claim 7, adding the polymers directly into the water system being treated (column 4, lines 19-21) infers membrane immersion. For claims 9 and 10, scales such as calcium phosphate are inhibited (column 5, lines 36-37). For claim 12, use of AA/APES monomer blends is shown in the Table bridging columns 8 and 9.

The claims differ in explicitly requiring that the membrane treatment not adversely affect either salt rejection of the membranes treated or throughput of aqueous solution or dispersion therethrough. However, McNeel et al teach treating reverse osmosis membranes with acrylic acid polymers, combinations of polymers and derivatives (column 3, line 63-column 4, line 26 with polyacrylic acids being named at column 4, line 5) and properties of the membrane-treating chemicals being effective in eliminating membrane fouling without adversely affecting either permeate flow or salt rejection (column 3, lines 25-34). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have practiced the membrane cleaning or treatment method of Chen in such manner so as to have no adverse effect on salt rejection of membrane or flow through the membrane, since McNeel teaches that such

effects are inherent properties of cleaning or treatment of membranes using acrylic acid-containing formulations.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al in view of Amjad patent 4,895,658. Claim 8 differs in requiring the membrane treated to be polyamide RO membranes. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have applied the method of Chen et al to polyamide RO membranes, since Amjad teaches at column 1, lines 9-11, 40-43) use of polyamide membranes, and effective inhibition of calcium-containing scale from their surfaces by use of cleaning formulae that include acrylic acid (column 4, lines 56-59 and column 5, lines 19-37).

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al in view of Kessler et al patent 6,099,755. Claim 13 differs in requiring the treatment agent to be AA/PEGAE formula. However, Chen et al disclose related AA/APES cleaning composition and it would have been obvious to have substituted the AA/PEGAE formula taught by Kessler et al at column 6, lines 39-53, since such formula has proven effective in inhibiting calcium phosphate scale under dynamic testing.

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al in view of Takiguchi et al PGPUBS Document US2003/0008793.

Claim 15 differs in requiring AA to be combined with an allyloxy-propanediol polymer. However, Takiguchi teaches such polymer or its derivative used in a cleaning composition (paragraph 140) and co-polymers of such compositions with acrylic acid polymers (paragraph 27) and their use in cleaning any hard or fabric surface (paragraph 1). It would have been further obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have combined the AA membrane treatment and cleaning polymer of Chen with the allyloxy-propanediol polymer of Takiguchi, since Chen discloses AA being especially effective when combined with a co-polymer and Takiguchi teaches the propanediol polymer having effectve detergent properties while being highly soluble in water (such as the water being passed through the membrane filter).

Applicant's arguments filed on April 11, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. It is argued that Chen does not explicitly state function of applying treating copolymer without adversely affecting salt rejection and throughput through the membrane. However, such functions are to at least some extent present with any

proven membrane treating/cleaning composition else the composition would not be used and are explicitly stated by McNeel where membranes are cleaned with similar acrylic acid polymers and mixtures of such polymers to those applied by Chen.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph Drodge at telephone number 571-272-1140. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda Walker, can reached at 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the examining group where this application is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either private PAIR or Public PAIR, and through Private PAIR only for unpublished applications. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have any questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JWD

May 22, 2006

JOSEPH DRODGE
PRIMARY EXAMINER